

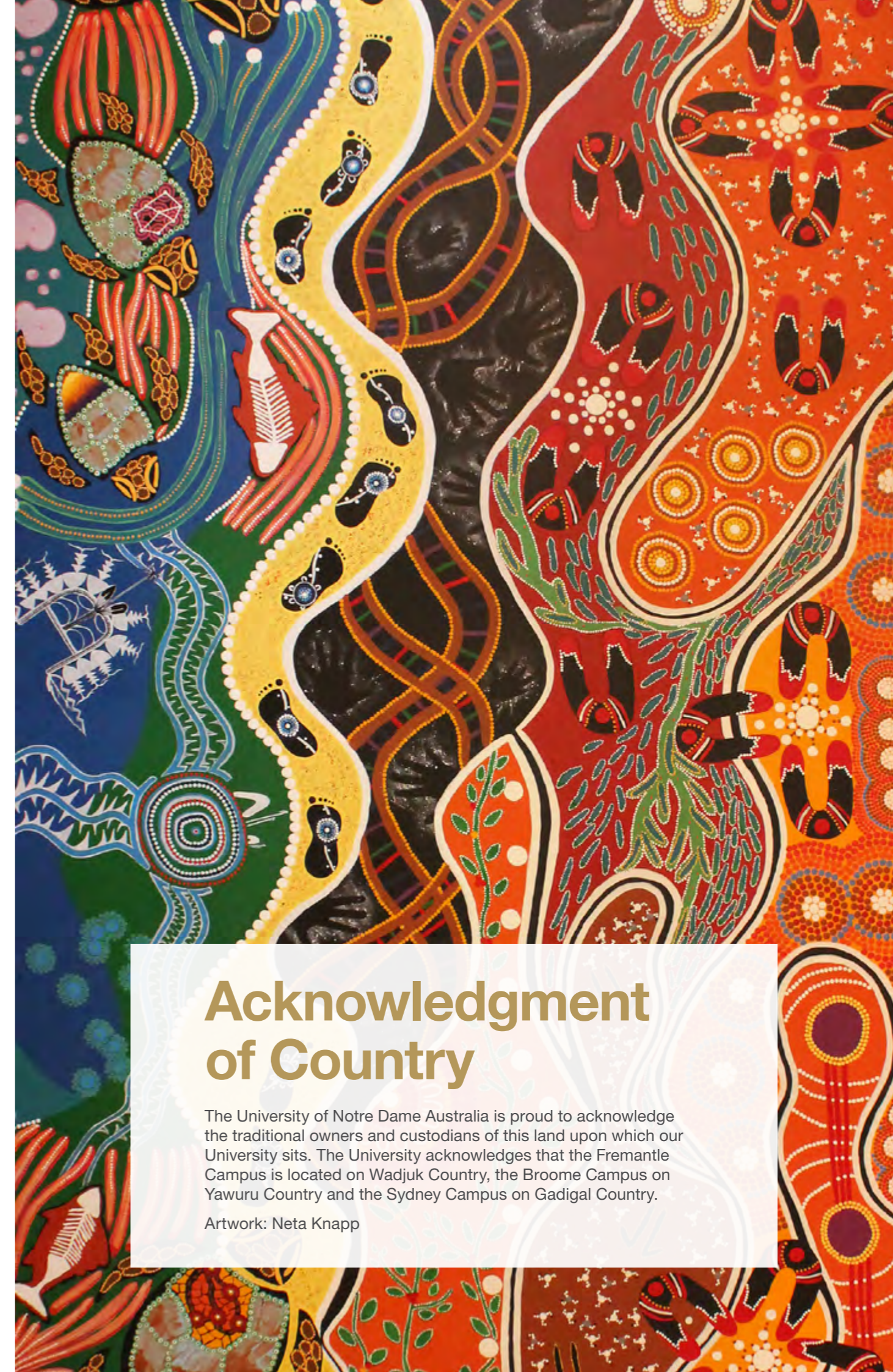


University Research Strategy

2023-2026

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Acknowledgment of Country

The University of Notre Dame Australia is proud to acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land upon which our University sits. The University acknowledges that the Fremantle Campus is located on Wadjuk Country, the Broome Campus on Yawuru Country and the Sydney Campus on Gadigal Country.

Artwork: Neta Knapp

Objects

The University's Objects are at the heart of all we do as a Catholic University.

The Objects of the University are:

- a) the provision of university education within a context of Catholic faith and values; and
- b) the provision of an excellent standard of –
 - i) teaching, scholarship and research;
 - ii) training for the professions; and
 - iii) pastoral care for its students.

Foreword

Since its inception four decades ago as Australia's first Catholic university, The University of Notre Dame Australia has grown and matured to build an enviable record of performance in learning and teaching, along with graduate outcomes. As of 2022, our student and graduate performance scores are consistently among the best in the sector.

Building on this rich history, the University launched a new Strategic Plan in 2022 which places a strong emphasis on transformative research. The plan commits us to making a positive difference by undertaking research that addresses real world challenges, improves the lives of people in our communities and impacts society for the common good. Describing the institutional evolution that must take place, the Strategic Plan signals that our university must "breathe with two lungs" referring to the important dual functions of teaching and learning, and research. It articulates our ambition that by 2026 we be as renowned for research as we are for teaching, and internationally known for transformative research in key thematic areas.

To achieve this aspiration, I am delighted to present the University's 2023-2026 Research Strategy, which comes at this important point in the University's history.

Over the next four years, we will focus on enhancing the University's research profile: pursuing research excellence, partnering for impact, increasing research investment and developing the research training we offer our Higher Degree by Research students.

We are building on solid foundations. Our research has been recognised as world class in several national assessment exercises. Notre Dame also has three research institutes broadly in the areas of health, ethics and society, and Indigenous studies, all of which have been successful in producing high quality research outputs and attracting significant funding.

The 2023-2026 Research Strategy reflects our distinctive character as a Catholic university. It recognises our rich institutional history and, importantly, our considerable aspirations for 2026 and beyond. This strategy, supported by significant investment, will guide the University as it continues to grow its national and international research profile.

In response to the University's vision for transformative research, this strategy also develops three cross-disciplinary research themes that build on our current and emerging areas of strength. Our three transformative research themes not only align with our Mission and Objects, but they are also distinctive in the Australian context. The themes inform one another, bringing together researchers across disciplines, communities, industry, and society – both nationally and globally.

This is a research strategy that responds to the needs of our communities (Transformative Research Theme: **Strong Communities**), that enriches human lives (Transformative Research Theme: **Good Lives**), and that supports human health, particularly for the vulnerable and which is grounded in the dignity of the human person (Transformative Research Theme: **Exceptional Care**) (p.14-21). Partnership and collaboration with our communities will be central to the direction and success of our research endeavours.

Importantly, this strategy also articulates the research culture to which we aspire, how we will work together with our partners to change lives, and how we will measure our performance.

I would like to sincerely thank all those who have taken part in the development of this strategy, from our research leaders, Senior Management Group, those in professional divisions and individual staff members and stakeholders who have provided valuable feedback over several months. The consultation and collaboration process leading to this strategy is a testament to the commitment of the university community to our future success.

This is an incredibly exciting time for Notre Dame, and we look forward to sharing our research successes as we implement this strategy over the coming four years.

Professor Aron Murphy
Pro Vice-Chancellor Research

Strategy on a Page



Where are we now?

Notre Dame has excelled as a teaching-focused university and, over the past five years, we have begun to grow our research capability and performance. We have a solid foundation to build on having achieved World Standard ratings in select Fields of Research in 2018 ERA assessment and having seen significant grant success for an institution of our size.

Internal Context

- Launch of new University Strategic Plan 2022-26, including a focus on pillars: Transformative Research and Universality (international partnerships)
- Our identity as a Catholic university
- High-trust relationships with our stakeholders and mission-aligned partners
- Passion and integrity of our researchers

External Context

- Research requirements for Australian universities
- Government focus on research impact (social, economic, environmental, and cultural), national priorities and industry partnerships
- Opportunity: Large mission-aligned partners in healthcare and education
- Sustainability: Cost of research in Australian universities



Where do we want to be in 2026?

Vision – Transformative Research (p.8)

To address real world challenges, improve the lives of people in our communities, and impact society for the common good.

Ambition (p.9)

To enhance our impact for the common good in society. We are as renowned for research as we are for teaching, and internationally recognised for high quality research with transformative impact in our key thematic areas. Notre Dame is known for its research partnerships, especially international links, and has significant external research investment sustaining our research vision.

Identity (p.9)

Research is acknowledged as core to the fulfilment of Notre Dame's Objects and identity as a Catholic university. Our stakeholders celebrate the ways our research is having mission-aligned impact for the common good.

2026 Outcomes (p.10)

- Excellence
- Impact
- Investment
- Research training



How will we get there?

Principles of our Research Community (p.12-13)

- Integrity and ethical behaviour
- Mutual enhancement
- Continual development
- Prioritising our partners

Transformative Research Themes (p.14-21)

- Good lives
- Exceptional care
- Strong communities

Strategic Priorities (p.22-39)

- Investing in our people
- Building on our strengths
- Partnering for impact
- Enhancing our research environment

Our Vision



Transformative Research

Research that addresses real world challenges, improves the lives of people in our communities, and impacts society for the common good.



Notre Dame's vision for Transformative Research is one of the five pillars of our University Strategic Plan 2022-26.

Our research ambition

Our task in this fourth decade of the University is to complement our outstanding record in teaching and learning with an equally impressive record in transformative research. Every university breathes with two lungs: teaching and research. Our teaching and learning needs to be enriched by high quality research and scholarship. And our commitment to predicate our teaching and learning on serving the common good will necessitate an equally strong obligation to undertake research which speaks to real world issues and challenges, such as those prevalent in health and education, and social inequality that persists for some communities globally. Our ambition for 2026 and beyond is to further enhance our impact for the common good in society by strengthening our research position, and to be as renowned for research as we are for teaching.

Our identity and mission as a Catholic university

The placement of research at the core of the University Strategic Plan acknowledges its fundamental importance not only to our standing as an Australian university, but to the fulfilment of our Objects and implementation of the idea of a Catholic university. A Catholic university will always challenge the view that research is worthwhile only when it results in technological innovation, commercial gain, and other commonly accepted metrics. Research can make a difference in the lives of people and society when ideas genuinely change the outlook of people, touching their hearts and minds. Our research will cross disciplinary boundaries as we collaborate with each other within the University and beyond. Above all, our research will serve the integral human development that is fundamental to all our work as a university.

Transforming human lives and communities

Transformative research, for Notre Dame, means that research can transform lives and communities including the professions and industries where we work. Fundamentally it concerns how research can contribute to the common good by positively affecting individuals living in societies to solve challenges within our world. Thus, a major focus of our research, whether in the social sciences, humanities or the sciences and technology, is that it needs to transform human lives, sustain human dignity and impact society for the common good.

Solving real world challenges with our partners

Research must solve real world problems to stay relevant and contribute to the common good. Notre Dame's Transformative Research will be action-oriented towards positive impact while never forgetting the need for foundational research in the pursuit of new knowledge. Working with industry and community, we will broaden our innovation and translational impact, by striving to deliver high-quality, world-leading research which addresses local and global challenges. We will advance knowledge to help individuals, families, institutions, and society. We will do this by researching mission-aligned challenges for the common good and impact – social, economic, environmental and cultural. We will focus on research aligned to our areas of strength and where we can make the biggest difference. Our social and research partners will challenge us to be increasingly creative as we pursue research that serves humanity.

2026 Outcomes

Achieving our vision.

By the end of 2026, Notre Dame will have sustainably achieved the following high-level outcomes:



Excellence

Achieving World Standard or above performance in our target Fields of Research (FoRs). The quality of our research is nationally and internationally recognised.



Impact

Increased research engagement and national and international impact outcomes. Significant increase in the size and scale of our partnerships and documented evidence of research impact.



Investment

Increased external research income where Notre Dame is the administering institution. Significant growth in philanthropic and industry partner research income.







Research Training

Increased number of high quality domestic and international Higher Degree by Research (HDR) enrolments that are supported by industry and timely completions.

Towards 2026

Monitoring our progress.

As we move towards 2026, the strategic priorities and initiatives in this strategy will enable Notre Dame to achieve our vision for Transformative Research and the outcomes we seek. But how will we know if we're on track? Over the next four years we will closely monitor our performance across a range of lead indicators to help us track our progress. This will provide us with feedback along the way, allowing us to refine our strategic settings to ensure we achieve our vision. We will assess our performance using a range of best practice indicators for research quality, engagement and impact, external investment, and research training.

	2026 Outcomes	How will we know we're on track?
 Excellence	Achieving World Standard or above performance in our target Fields of Research (FoRs). The quality of our research is nationally and internationally recognised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased relative citation performance of journal articles in our citation assessed FoRs Increased percentage of publications with international co-authors Increased percentage of journal articles ranked SJR Q1 in our peer reviewed FoRs Increased number of quality monographs published in our peer reviewed FoRs Improved performance in discipline relevant indicators Improved performance in regular external expert review of research quality
 Impact	Increased research engagement and national and international impact outcomes. Significant increase in the size and scale of our research partnerships and documented evidence of research impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact-driven project narratives in development across target FoRs Increased size and scale of new industry partnerships Increased percentage of submitted grant applications with international investigators Increased percentage of Open Access publications Increased number of research public engagement pieces published on national and international media platforms
 Investment	Increased external research income where Notre Dame is the administering institution. Significant growth in philanthropic and industry partner research income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased Category 1 grants income Increased industry partner research income Increased philanthropic gifts supporting research Increase percentage of research income from international funders Increased Research Block Grant funding
 Training	Increased number of high quality domestic and international HDR enrolments that are supported by industry and timely completions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased externally-funded HDR scholarships Increased number of industry-engaged HDR projects (6-month internship) Increased number of international HDR students Increased number of Indigenous HDR students Increased HDR student retention rate Increased percentage of timely HDR completions

Principles of our Research Community

Our culture.

As an emerging research university with ambitious goals over the next four years, it matters how we build our culture. This is even more important for Notre Dame as a Catholic university. Given the value we place on community, we want to be explicit about the virtues and actions we expect from our researchers.

As affirmed in our University Strategic Plan, “above all, our research will serve the integral human development that is fundamental to all our work as a university” – this includes the integral human development of every Notre Dame researcher, those we partner with and those who engage with and benefit from our research.



Integrity and ethical behaviour

Respect

Underpinning our research culture is our unwavering commitment to respect for the dignity of the human person, reflected in our behaviours day to day. We prioritise access and equity, shared opportunity and support, particularly for those who are marginalised or vulnerable.

Ethical conduct

Collectively we commit to the ethical conduct of research. This will inform all our deliberations, decisions and actions.

Courage

We will have the courage to challenge actions and behaviour that do not meet our standards. These commitments and accountabilities will ensure that our research is known for its integrity.

Integrity

Together we work to foster the development of the virtue of integrity in one other as researchers and in our wider lives.

Mutual enhancement

A community

We are a community of researchers in which each of us bears responsibility to contribute to the common good.

Mutual benefit

We will be a place where mutual opportunity and enhancement defines our culture, and the development of the individual and the pursuit of the common good go hand in hand.

Shared success

Our personal success will be the University's success. Concurrently, the University's success delivers opportunities for students, staff and our partners.

Continual development

Excellence

Aligned with our Objects, we commit to a culture of excellence in research and to actions and outcomes that demonstrate impactful change.

Enterprising

We will be enterprising and adaptive in our approach, responding effectively to our external environment and to opportunities.

Stewardship

We will recognise and respect the stewardship we all have for our organisational strategy and a shared understanding of the responsibility to ensure a sustainable and thriving university. We will be committed to and confident of our place in research, and of the unique value proposition we have as Notre Dame.

Prioritising our partners

Shared understanding

Our partners, large and small, will be drawn to us and us to them, through our shared commitment to integrity, mutual enhancement and continual development.

Listening

We will listen carefully and be guided by the needs of our stakeholders. We will understand their challenges, their drivers and the outcomes they desire for improvement. We will share ownership of these deliverables and successes alike.

Working together

Our collective effort will drive the creation of actionable knowledge, of innovation and transformation, to improve the lives of individuals and enhance our communities and industries.

Transformative Research

Transformative Research Themes

Good lives. Exceptional care. Strong communities.

We pursue our vision through three cross-disciplinary Transformative Research Themes that build on our current and emerging research strengths in philosophy and theology, education, Indigenous studies and the biomedical, clinical and health sciences.

Our research themes align with our Mission and Objects and are distinctive in the Australian context. The themes inform one another, bringing together researchers across disciplines, communities, industry, and society – both nationally and globally.



Good Lives

- Rich understanding of human flourishing
- Philosophical and theological foundations
- Education that forms the whole person



Exceptional Care

- Care for all, especially vulnerable groups
- Advancing excellent health care
- Grounded in the dignity of the human person



Strong Communities

- Impact for the common good
- Indigenous leadership
- Building global community

Transformative Research Theme 1

Good Lives

Research that helps people lead flourishing and integrated human lives.

Rich understanding of human flourishing

At Notre Dame we think about human wellbeing and flourishing in a richer sense than other academic institutions. We see a good life as encompassing physical, mental and social wellbeing, creative endeavours and the pursuit of excellence. It also includes the development of moral character and virtue and addressing the deeper spiritual and religious dimension of human life – questions of truth, beauty, goodness; of purpose and meaning; of faith and reason.

Philosophical and theological foundations

The question of what constitutes the ‘the good life’ and human flourishing has been central in the history of philosophy and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. As a Catholic university, we have a foundational commitment to investing in world-leading research in philosophy, theology and ethics, as part of the broader liberal arts tradition. We forge cross-disciplinary connections to advance research that helps people live good human lives.

Education that forms the whole person

Our education research – from early childhood through to university – is shaped by our commitment to integral human development for all learners. From our internationally recognised research in inclusive education through to our focus on teacher education and professional learning, we are supporting the formation of the next generation of educational leaders.



Transformative Research Projects



The past today

Our research explores how ancient and medieval thinkers can help us solve problems we face today. Australian Research Council funded projects at Notre Dame include a Discovery Early Career Researcher Award investigating the relevance of medieval theories of nature for current environmental debates, and a Future Fellowship that reconsiders Aristotle’s ethical theory in light of contemporary ethical challenges.



Spiritual wellbeing

Partnering with St Vincent’s Health Australia, we are pioneering an evidence-based spiritual care training program for healthcare professionals across Australia. Our research supports integrated patient wellbeing across the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual domains.



Science and religion

Cutting-edge research at the intersections of philosophy, theology, religious studies, and the natural sciences. We host international projects funded by the John Templeton Foundation, which examine the philosophical-theological implications of 21st century evolutionary biology, the psychology of religious belief and spiritual desire, and the religious dimensions of self-enhancement and “biohacking”.



Catholic education

We are growing an international research network fostering excellence in Catholic education. GRACE (Global Researchers Advancing Catholic Education) is a collaboration between Boston College (US), the University of Notre Dame Australia, Mary Immaculate College Limerick (Ireland), Saint Mary’s University Twickenham (UK) and the International Office of Catholic Education in Rome.



Inclusive education and assistive technology

Translating leading research on accessible assistive technology to support learners with diverse needs, our research is informing professional development for universities in Malaysia on accessible OER and assistive technology, supported by UNESCO Paris.

Transformative Research Theme 2

Exceptional Care

Research that advances care for all, especially for vulnerable groups.

Advancing excellent healthcare

Notre Dame undertakes world-leading research in medical and health sciences that addresses the primary health priorities of our communities. We deliver advances in healthcare in areas such as mobility disorders, cardiology, neurology, pain management, psychiatry, gynaecological cancer, cancer survivorship, exercise as medicine, aged care, and end of life care. Our collaborative research teams of university academics and healthcare providers drive translational and impactful research. As a university that has focused on the training of health professionals in medicine, nursing, and allied health for over thirty years, we have developed a strong network of clinicians and health service providers focused on addressing real world issues that impact patients. With links to public and private healthcare services across Australia, our researchers have significant opportunities to collaborate with health professionals to deliver transformative outcomes.

Care for all, especially vulnerable groups

Our commitment to inclusive health fundamentally shapes our research at Notre Dame. Using a whole-of-community approach, we prioritise research that advances healthcare for vulnerable groups, for example, research programs in palliative care, disability healthcare and healthcare for those experiencing homelessness. We have longstanding partnerships with community organisations that support vulnerable populations within local and wider urban communities, extending into rural and remote regions across Australia.

Grounded in the dignity of the human person

As a Catholic university, our commitment to research that delivers exceptional care for others is underpinned by our non-negotiable commitment to the dignity of every human person. Our researchers explore ways to sustain human dignity across the full spectrum of research. This includes a commitment to improving the social determinants of health and the wellbeing of a community, not solely its individual members.



Transformative Research Projects

Homeless healthcare

Enormous life expectancy and health gaps exist for people experiencing homelessness, but these can be prevented. The drive to reduce health inequalities lies at the heart of our Home2Health research team. Working closely with health and homelessness services at the coalface and, critically, with those with a lived experience of homelessness, Home2Health is host to a growing program of research, evaluation, and evidence-informed advocacy policy work around homelessness, in WA, nationally and internationally.



Closing the gap

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and partnering with 10 universities and health services across Australia, Notre Dame is the host of a major research project aimed at ensuring Aboriginal women living in remote regions can access culturally appropriate cervical cancer screening services. The project aims to improve the timeliness of diagnosis and treatment and reduce the need for Aboriginal women to leave their communities for care.



Palliative care

Notre Dame is leading a major project funded by the Australian Government Department of Health's National Palliative Care Projects. Bringing together researchers from universities and health and palliative care providers, it aims to improve screening for and care of patients with depression, anxiety, and demoralisation in a palliative context. Collaborators include Flinders University, St Vincent's Hospital Sydney, Cabrini Health, Eastern Palliative Care, and Monash Health.



Heart health

Our researchers have created the world's largest echocardiogram database linked to the national death record which is being used to challenge current clinical practice in the management of patients with complex heart disease. Their research is contributing to the development of new AI technologies that could lead to improved access to cardiac healthcare in rural and remote areas.



Disability

Part of an NHMRC funded project, we are conducting research aimed at reducing potentially preventable hospitalisations and building health literacy for children and adolescents with intellectual disability. Notre Dame has also developed a free health literacy guide to help caregivers better understand the healthcare needs of people living with intellectual disability, supported by a WA Department of Health Research Translation Project grant.



Transformative Research Theme 3

Strong Communities

Research with communities that impacts society for the common good.

Impact for the common good

We develop partnerships with local organisations to address social challenges, enact positive change through applied community-grounded research, and enrich the lives of both individuals and communities. Informed by Indigenous knowledges, Notre Dame seeks to better understand the past and the present as we together build towards a just and inclusive future. Building on the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching and of the liberal arts, our diverse range of disciplines across Indigenous studies, health, education, law, business, social sciences, and creative practice enables us to deliver holistic solutions to social challenges.

Embracing community and industry involvement

We embrace community collaboration and working collectively in the development, conduct, implementation, and dissemination of our research. With a national footprint, we are embedded within our communities and work with locally based research partners such as Aboriginal organisations, Catholic NGOs, disability advocates, responsible businesses, and leaders in the professions. Our academic disciplines have established relationships with industry and professional bodies, enabling transformative research collaborations for the common good.

Indigenous leadership

Indigenous Studies is a priority area for Notre Dame and fundamental to this is expanding our capacity for Indigenous leadership within research, while integrating it within our teaching and learning across the University. We will embed pathways for Indigenous leadership to drive both the focus and prioritisation of our research areas, framed by cultural knowledges and strengths-based discourse to collaboratively facilitate impactful change and support communities.

Building global community

Notre Dame research is making inroads towards tackling national and global challenges such as modern slavery and sustainability. Motivated by the focus on 'Universality' in our University Strategic Plan 2022-26 and by the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we are committed to research that strengthens civil society and builds our global human community.

Transformative Research Projects



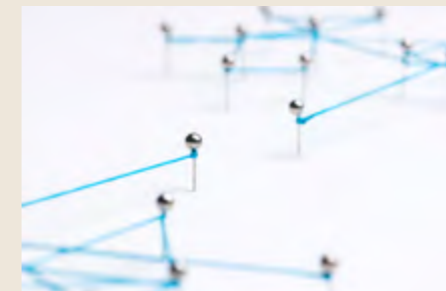
Indigenous knowledges

Notre Dame is leading an ARC Linkage Project on the intergenerational cultural transfer of Indigenous knowledges. This Aboriginal environmental humanities research investigates, describes, and compares the transfer of knowledge in a Kimberley and a southwest region of Western Australia to understand how cultural values, knowledge and practices can persist despite on-going colonial interruptions. Outcomes contribute to Aboriginal wellbeing, enhance biodiversity and advance water communication.



Yawuru Nagulagun

Our researchers are partnering with Murdoch University on a project aimed at reconciling the ecological, social, and cultural values of WA coastal waters, focused on the case of Yawuru Nagulagun (Roebuck Bay). The project is funded by the WA Department of Jobs Tourism and Innovation's WA Marine Science Project in Support of the United Nations (UN) Decade for Ocean Science.



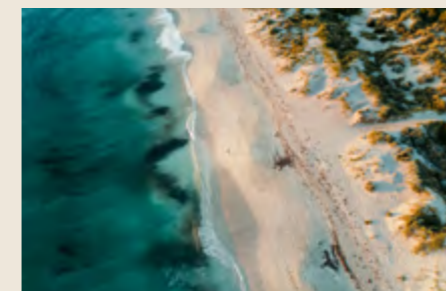
Modern slavery

Funded by an ARC Discovery Early Career Researcher Award, our research aims to generate awareness and knowledge about the modern slavery – climate change nexus. Businesses can be linked to modern slavery and climate change through their operations and supply chains, and play a major role in mitigating these critical issues. Research outcomes will advance business efforts and accountability in relation to these problems and benefit impacted communities.



Religion and society

We are exploring the dynamics of religion in society, politics and culture, bringing together expertise in the social sciences, philosophy and theology. Funded by the John Templeton Foundation and hosted by Queen's University Belfast, Notre Dame is a collaborator on a major international project to investigate contemporary forms of atheism, agnosticism, and non-belief. Our researchers also specialise in the study of Catholicism in contemporary Australia and around the world.



Plastic waste on WA beaches

Research by Notre Dame has highlighted the lasting impact single use plastics are having on Western Australia's beaches, with items well over a decade old regularly washing up on one of Fremantle's most popular beaches. The research team – assisted by a dedicated group of volunteers – has collected and analysed over 5000 individual pieces of litter from Bather's Beach over a seven-month period.

Strategic Priorities and Implementation Plan

How will we get there?

To achieve our ambitious vision for Transformative Research and the outcomes we are seeking by 2026 (Excellence. Impact. Investment. Training), Notre Dame will pursue four strategic priorities in research over the next four years:



1. Investing in our people



2. Building on our strengths



3. Partnering for impact



4. Enhancing our research environment

Strategic Priorities





Strategic Priority 1 Investing in our People

We will invest in our researchers, enhance our culture and grow the capability we need to achieve our vision.



Strategic
Priorities



Strategic Priority 1

Investing in our People

We will invest in our researchers, enhance our culture and grow the capability we need to achieve our vision.

Researcher development

Our researchers are the people and community at the heart of research at Notre Dame. We want our researchers to feel 100% confident they can build a world-class research career at Notre Dame and deliver transformative impact with individuals, communities, and society.

Our HDR students

Our Higher Degree by Research students are vital members of our research community. We will ensure that Notre Dame's reputation for outstanding student experience extends to our research students, both local and international. We will attract high-quality HDR enrolments in our target Fields of Research and Themes (SP2). With our partners (SP3), we will create new scholarship opportunities and increase industry engaged HDR projects. We will enhance our researcher development program to enable our HDR students to acquire the skills they need to complete their degree, progress their career trajectory and, crucially, to develop as a person of character and integrity, fostering integral human development.

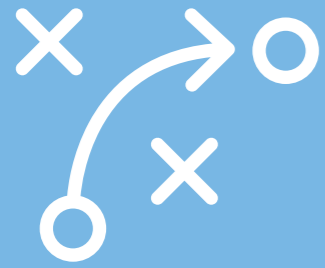
Culture and community

As an emerging research university with ambitious research goals, it matters how we build our culture. We are a community of researchers in which each of us bears responsibility to contribute to the common good. The 'Principles of our Research Community' (p.12) are mutual enhancement, continual development, prioritising our partners and integrity and ethical behaviour. Together we will build a supportive and vibrant research culture at Notre Dame that is appealing to students, researchers and partners alike.

Growing our research capability

To achieve our vision, we will significantly grow our research capability over the next four years by attracting new talent at all levels. Building on our strengths (SP2), we will grow teams of excellent researchers from HDR, early-career, mid-career through to senior researchers, and including strategic joint appointments with industry and international partners.

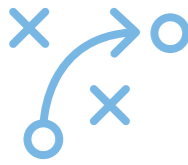
SP1. People	Initiatives
Researcher development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Career Researcher Awards. Establish dedicated internal grants for ECRs to establish their research profile. • Research Development Grants. Establish internal grants to provide targeted support. • Vice Chancellor's Research Awards. Establish high-profile University level awards for research excellence and impact. • Facilitate career development opportunities for researchers through workload allocation and promotion pathways. • Provide high quality researcher development and training programs (e.g. grant-writing incubator, impact planning support). Support researchers in public outreach and knowledge exchange (e.g. media training, public events). • Acknowledge research opportunity and provide on-ramps for staff to become research active.
Our HDR students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Training Strategy. Develop an aligned three-year HDR strategy and assess the case for a Graduate School. • Increase HDR Scholarships and Awards through developing strong philanthropic and partner funding streams. • Provide excellent research training, career development and formation opportunities (integral human development). • Increase industry-engaged HDR projects, providing work-integrated development opportunities (e.g. six-month internships). • Attract high quality international HDR students and enhance HDR student experience for both local and international students.
Culture and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of our Research Community. Raise awareness and ownership of our principles. • Build inclusive communities of researchers with staff, students, community, and private and public sector partners. • Catalyse communities of research practice through events and activities (e.g. lectures, conferences, seminars, clusters).
Growing our research capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notre Dame Transformative Research Fellows. Establish a flagship University fellowships scheme. • Pursue partnerships and collaborations that build capability, e.g. joint initiatives, joint appointments, adjuncts. • Attract and retain excellent researchers in our strategically aligned Fields of Research (FoRs) and Transformative Research themes (SP2). • Attract and retain Indigenous researchers and HDR students across all our strategically aligned FoRs and Themes.



Strategic Priority 2 Building on our Strengths

We will focus on strategically aligned Fields of Research and champion our Transformative Research Themes.





Strategic Priority 2 Building on our Strengths

We will focus on strategically aligned Fields of Research and champion our Transformative Research Themes.

World standard Fields of Research (FoRs)

To achieve our transformative research vision, we will focus on pursuing research excellence in a targeted set of strategically aligned Fields of Research. We will build on this foundation of high quality research, ensuring each stage of our growth is aligned to the foundation. The benchmark standard for research quality for Australian universities set by TEQSA is research that is World Standard measured using best practice indicators (or research of National Standing in fields specific to Australia). Our selection of target FoRs to achieve this quality benchmark is informed by our current and emerging areas of research strength. We have a strong track record to build on. Our research has been recognised as above World Standard in previous national research assessments in fields such as Biomedical and Clinical Sciences. The selection of our target FoRs has also been guided by the Fields of Education in which the University delivers courses of study and where we must therefore be undertaking high quality research. Our identity, vision, mission and the needs of our partners, communities and world have also played a vital role in shaping our focus FoRs for pursuing research excellence.

Five strategically aligned Fields of Research have been selected as our focus: FoR 39 Education, FoR 50 Philosophy & Religious Studies/Theology, FoR 45 Indigenous Studies, FoR 32 Biomedical & Clinical Sciences, FoR 42 Health Sciences. New target FoRs may also emerge as other mission-aligned areas of research strength develop over the next four years.

Externally-funded collaborative projects

Building on our research that is World Standard, we will support researchers poised to secure competitive grants or other external funding (industry or philanthropic). We will foster the development of collaborative projects with secured partner commitments from national and international universities and from industry and community partners. This focus is vital for the sustainability of our research vision. In Australia, supporting research performance requires significant investment by universities. While significant internal investment is crucial for Notre Dame at our developmental stage as an emerging research university, building external research investment – both industry and philanthropic – is the way forward for sustainable stewardship in achieving our Transformative Research vision.

Programs, Centres and Institutes

Building on our externally-funded collaborative projects, we will invest in developing highly strategic and ambitious programs of research, especially multi-partner and international collaborations. Notre Dame currently has three Research Institutes broadly in the areas of health, ethics and society, and Indigenous studies, all of which have been successful in producing high quality research outputs and attracting significant funding. Over the next four years, we will pursue ways to enhance our institutes, scale new strategic research programs and create cross-disciplinary research centres.

Notre Dame Transformative Research Themes

Building on our strategic programs of research, our Transformative Research Themes – Good lives; Exceptional care; Strong communities (p.14-21) – articulate the cross-disciplinary thematic areas of research for which we aspire to be globally known. Together with our communities and partners, we will champion our Research Themes in academia and beyond, in the public and private sector, in Australia and around the world, as we pursue transformative impact for the common good.



SP2. Focus	Initiatives
World standard Fields of Research (FoRs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic appointments. Invest in recruitment and retention of excellent researchers in our target FoRs. Monitor staff research outputs and progressively evaluate research quality using best practice indicators. Provide training on research quality in different disciplines, best practice indicators and strategic publishing. Target support and incentives (e.g. internal grants, awards, workload) towards high quality research outputs. Develop strategic approaches to any national research assessment exercise, focusing on target FoRs.
Externally-funded collaborative projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near-miss grants. Establish a priority sub-category in the Research Development Grants for refining near-miss grants. Grant development. Target additional support and resources to increase the probability of large grant success. Target support and incentives (e.g. internal grants, awards, workload) towards research projects poised to secure external funding (grants, industry, philanthropic).
Programs, Centres and Institutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big Ideas: PVCRC Strategic Initiatives Innovation Fund. Open for EOI pitches to scale ambitious research collaborations. Enhance our national Research Institutes: Institute for Health Research; Institute for Ethics & Society; Nulungu Institute. Invest in the development of new research programs and collaborative research centres in strategically aligned areas. Philanthropy. Develop a strong philanthropic funding stream to support scaling of major research programs and new centres. Partnerships. Develop strong partnerships to support scaling of major research programs and new centres (SP3, p.32-35).
Notre Dame Transformative Research Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notre Dame Transformative Research Themes. Champion our research themes beyond Notre Dame in academia, with our communities and partners and the wider Australian public and world. Notre Dame Transformative Research Fellows. Establish flagship University fellowships scheme aligned with our Themes. Translate and share stories of research having transformative impact for Good lives, Exceptional care, Strong communities.



Strategic Priority 3 Partnering for Impact

We will forge ambitious research partnerships, nationally and internationally, to expand our transformative impact.



Strategic
Priorities



Strategic Priority 3 Partnering for Impact

We will forge ambitious research partnerships, nationally and internationally, to expand our transformative impact.

Partner for transformative impact

We will address real world needs and priorities through proactive and meaningful engagement with our community and industry partners. We will pursue integrated partnerships, developing new knowledge and solutions to impact and change lives. As we translate our research for partners in the pursuit of the common good, we will attract new philanthropic and industry funding. In line with our key principle of 'Prioritising our partners' (p.13), we will work with partners and beneficiaries to solve problems and grow capabilities, underpinned by our research expertise and enriched by the mutually beneficial partnership. We will listen carefully and involve our partners at every step in setting our research agenda. Our distinctive Transformative Research Themes (p.14-21) and the principles guiding our research community (p.12-13) mean our partners will be drawn to us and us to them.

Universality and global focus

The Universality pillar of our University Strategic Plan 2022-26 expands our vision for research collaboration beyond Australia to our global partners. We will establish new international strategic research partnerships, collaborating in the delivery of research and sharing our research insights across our national and international networks for the good of society.

Big ideas and innovative partnerships

As an emerging research university, we want to cultivate an entrepreneurial culture where research innovation thrives. We will develop a dedicated pitch round – the 'Big Ideas: PVCRC Strategic Initiatives Innovation Fund' – to build an innovation pipeline for ambitious research projects with strong return on investment and creative approaches to partnerships that build our research capability and performance against key metrics. Through the Big Ideas Fund, we will invest in highly strategic research collaborations with national and international universities and industry and community partners to drive world-leading research, address national and global challenges and deliver transformative impact to beneficiaries.

SP3. Partnerships	Initiatives
Partner for transformative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target support and resourcing for ambitious research partnerships with transformative impact. Target support and incentives (e.g. internal grants, awards, workload) for research projects with secured partner commitment and strong potential for impact. Facilitate agile approaches to multi-partner, multi-site, national and international, research partnerships. Target impact planning support and resources for collaborative research projects, documenting evidence of impact with partners and trialling digital solutions. Enhance discoverability of Notre Dame research with potential partners, focusing on impact stories aligned with our Research Themes. Build capacity for research engagement (e.g. co-location of researchers with partners, staff exchanges, provision of professional development and training to partners and beneficiaries of research). Support hybrid and non-traditional research teams (e.g. joint appointments from industry and community, asset sharing). Explore opportunities for research commercialisation in collaboration with our partners. Develop industry-funded HDR scholarships and increase industry-engaged HDR projects (e.g. six-month internships).
Universality and global focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target support and resourcing for ambitious international research partnerships. Target support for grant applications to international funding bodies and build links with international philanthropic partners. Support our high performing researchers to share their research through international exchange, fellowships and conferences. Host leading experts from our global networks to collaborate with us and help further our knowledge (e.g. visiting scholar program). Explore potential joint and collaborative HDR degrees with opportunities for international research experience.
Big ideas and innovative partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big Ideas: PVCRC Strategic Initiatives Innovation Fund. EOI and pitch process, creating a research innovation pipeline that supports ambitious research partnerships. Develop innovative partnership models that deliver a step-change in Notre Dame research capability and performance in target FoRs. Align major university investment and innovation with Research Strategy (e.g. research infrastructure).



Strategic Priority 4 Enhancing our Research Environment

We will build a dynamic research environment across the University that drives performance.





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Whole-of-university approach

Our University Strategic Plan states that “Every university breathes with two lungs: teaching and research” and our ambition for 2026 is to be as renowned for research as we are for teaching. We will achieve this ambition through a whole-of-university approach, with every area of the University, both academic and professional, strategically aligned and working together to deliver our research outcomes.

Reduce barriers to research

A significant part of our institutional research journey will be the maturation of our systems, processes and governance in support of research and researchers. This will drive institutional research performance and enhance our ability to be agile and work effectively with our partners and funding bodies.

Research integrity

In line with the first principle of our research community (p.12), we will lead a renewed focus on research integrity and ethics management. We will foster the development of the virtue of integrity in one other as researchers and a research culture committed to respect for the dignity of the human person, reflected in our behaviours day to day.

Evidence led

Improved research performance requires clear and timely data on which to base our strategy and planning, and to assess our performance. We will invest in IT and digital systems that will enable the use of data to support performance and improve research systems and processes.



SP4. Environment	Initiatives
Whole-of-university approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise research alongside teaching across all portfolios of the University. • Communicate Research Strategy with all areas of the University, mobilising engagement and ownership by all staff. • Clarify expectations and accountabilities in delivering the Strategy to each division, academic and professional. • Align Notre Dame policies, procedures, and incentives to Research Strategy (e.g. promotions, awards, funding).
Reduce barriers to research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine systems, processes, and governance. • Enhance our Research Office as an enabler of research capability and our ambitious research agenda. • Reduce barriers to research income generation, especially time to contract research from project initiation to invoicing.
Research integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on research integrity and ethics, including compliance, risk management, compulsory professional development and training. • Foster a research culture committed to research integrity and respect for the dignity of the human person. • Invest in research integrity roles across Research Office and Faculties (Research Integrity Advisors).
Evidence led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in IT and digital systems that enhance research and provide access to the data we need. • Implement a series of data monitoring reports and dashboards, tracking progress towards our 2026 Outcomes (p.10).



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ND5853 | CRICOS 01032F

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